

Chinese teacher exchanges to fix this knowledge imbalance.

Recently declared the world's top polluter, China's power consumption increased more than 15 percent in the first half of 2007 alone. Mr. ISRAEL's bill authorizes new grants to fund U.S.-China energy and climate change education programs, along with joint research and development of carbon capture, sequestration technology, improved energy efficiency, and renewable energy sources.

In my view, China's connections to unstable energy markets like Iran, Sudan and Venezuela could set a foreign policy collision course with the United States. I strongly support the U.S.-China Energy Cooperation Act. To protect our environment and avoid future conflict, we need creative programs to boost U.S.-China energy cooperation.

I want to thank my colleagues for their hard work on this bipartisan agenda. I urge my colleagues to cosponsor all four bills and move quickly to enact this legislation into law.

PUBLIC SAFETY TAX CUT ACT

HON. RON PAUL

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 1, 2007

Mr. PAUL. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to introduce the Public Safety Tax Cut Act. This legislation will achieve two important public policy goals. First, it will effectively overturn a ruling of the Internal Revenue Service which has declared as taxable income the waiving of fees by local governments who provide service for public safety volunteers.

Many local governments use volunteer firefighters and auxiliary police either in place of, or as a supplement to, their public safety professionals. Often as an incentive to would-be volunteers, the local entities might waive all or a portion of the fees typically charged for city services such as the provision of drinking water, sewerage charges, or debris pick up. Local entities make these decisions for the purpose of encouraging folks to volunteer, and seldom do these benefits come anywhere near the level of a true compensation for the many hours of training and service required of the volunteers. This, of course, not even to mention the fact that these volunteers could very possibly be called into a situation where they may have to put their lives on the line.

Rather than encouraging this type of volunteerism, which is so crucial, particularly to America's rural communities, the IRS has decided that the provision of the benefits described above amount to taxable income. Not only does this adversely affect the financial position of the volunteer by foisting new taxes about him or her, it has in fact led local entities to stop providing these benefits, thus taking away a key tool they have used to recruit volunteers. That is why the IRS ruling in this instance has a substantial deleterious impact on the spirit of American volunteerism. How far could this go? For example, would consistent application mean that a local Salvation Army volunteer be taxed for the value of a complimentary ticket to that organization's annual county dinner? This is obviously bad policy.

This legislation would rectify this situation by specifically exempting these types of benefits from Federal taxation.

Next, this legislation would also provide paid professional police and fire officers with a \$1,000 per year tax credit. These professional public safety officers put their lives on the line each and every day, and I think we all agree that there is no way to properly compensate them for the fabulous services they provide. In America we have a tradition of local law enforcement and public safety provision. So, while it is not the role of our Federal Government to increase the salaries of these, it certainly is within our authority to increase their take-home pay by reducing the amount of money that we take from their pockets via Federal taxation, and that is something this bill specifically does as well.

President George Bush has called on Americans to volunteer their time and energy to enhancing public safety. Shouldn't Congress do its part by reducing taxes that discourage public safety volunteerism? Shouldn't Congress also show its appreciation to police officers and fire fighters by reducing their taxes? I believe the answer to both of these questions is a resounding "Yes" and therefore I am proud to introduce the Public Safety Tax Cut Act. I request that my fellow Members join in support of this key legislation.

IN MEMORY OF JANE GRAVES

HON. MIKE ROSS

OF ARKANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 1, 2007

Mr. ROSS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the memory of my dear friend Jane Graves of Nashville, Arkansas, who passed away July 30, 2007, at the age of 58.

Jane Graves was a beacon of light and hope to all of those who knew her and were blessed to call her friend. As someone who was determined in her fight against cancer, Jane completed a victory lap less than two months ago at the American Cancer Society's Relay for Life, marking her fourth year as a cancer survivor. As encouragement for countless others fighting cancer, Jane used her talents through her writing to tell of her experiences. Through a series of inspirational articles, she literally changed and impacted the lives of numerous cancer survivors she never even had the opportunity to meet.

The victory lap during the Relay for Life was symbolic of more than Jane's bout with cancer, it was also representative of her selfless nature in life. She took great joy in helping others and worked tirelessly to create a strong sense of community in Nashville. As a co-founder and co-publisher of the Nashville Leader, she was a highly acclaimed and respected journalist who consistently kept the residents of Nashville informed with the latest news and community events. Her coverage earned her awards from the Arkansas Press Association, the National Newspaper Association and the National Federation of Press Women, among others.

During her 35 years in Nashville, Jane was determined to leave her mark not just as a journalist, but also as an activist. She helped found the annual Howard County Children's benefit golf tournament, she was a recipient of the Chamber of Commerce Woman of the Year Award, she was a board member of the Howard County Children's Center and she

served as a past President of the Nashville Rotary Club.

I send my deepest condolences to her husband, Louie Graves of Nashville; her daughter Julie Murphy of Little Rock; her mother Glenna Siddon and stepfather Rupert Mobbs of Greenbrier; her brother and sister-in-law Bill and Pam Siddon of Great Falls, Virginia; and several nieces and nephews. Jane Graves will be greatly missed in Nashville, Southwest Arkansas and throughout the state of Arkansas, and I will continue to keep her family in my thoughts and prayers.

STUDENT AND TEACHER SAFETY ACT

HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, August 1, 2007

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, I rise today to introduce the Student and Teacher Safety Act. As a former teacher, I understand that when you enter the classroom you develop a sense of feeling safe and protected from the violence of the outside world. The classroom is meant to be a place where our children's minds can be developed and nurtured. Students should be focused on pursuing their dreams, not worrying about drugs and violence in the classroom.

Columbine High School, Colorado; in my own district at Hubbard Wood School in Winnetka; and most recently on the campus of Virginia Tech. Each of these schools and many others had their sense of safety shattered when they were subject to attack by an individual with a gun.

The Student and Teacher Safety Act will help promote a safer school environment by allowing full-time teachers the right to search a student or their property should they have reasonable suspicion that a weapon or illegal drugs have entered their classroom. The legislation simply codifies guidelines established by the U.S. Supreme Court in *New Jersey v. T.L.O.* (1985), which states that reasonable searches by school officials do not require a warrant signed by a judge if the search would reveal that the student violated the law or school rules and asks school districts to develop and implement a policy on school safety.

Teachers know their students. They know when a student is acting suspicious or that there is a problem. We must trust their instincts when they believe that their classroom is at risk. We also must protect these teachers from the risk of being punished or sued for following their instinct. Students have the right to a safe learning environment and teachers have the right to a safe workplace.

The Student and Teacher Safety Act passed the 109th Congress unopposed. The nation's largest teacher union, the National Education Association, supports the bill and believes "that a safe and effective learning climate is necessary for promoting educational excellence in public schools." As I have said before, if this bill helps one teacher stop one Columbine massacre, then Congress will have served the Nation well and protected its children.